



Florida Agricultural Statistics Service
1222 Woodward Street
Orlando, Florida 32803
407 / 648-6013

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/fl>

FIELD CROPS

PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS FOR 2004



April 1, 2004

FLORIDA

Dry conditions during the first half of March 2004 gave way to spotty showers during the last two weeks. Most temperatures for the month averaged above normal with northern areas recording some temperatures near freezing during the first part and again at the end of the month. The warmer temperatures brought out the blooms on northern ornamental and non-citrus fruit trees. Most potato planting was finished around Hastings by early March. Northern Peninsula and Panhandle producers resumed field preparations and planting of peanuts and corn at the beginning of the month as soils dried from the late February downpour. Flooding in low spots of the Panhandle and cold temperatures held back pasture and small grain forage growth in early March. Tobacco transplanting was in full swing during the first half of the month with Union County growers finishing by mid-month. Citrus trees in lower interior and coastal areas reached full bloom by mid-month, followed later in the month by trees in upper interior areas. Dry soils prevented some planting in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula in mid-March. Santa Rosa County producers prepared land for peanuts and cotton during the last two weeks.

Florida farmers indicated that as of March 1 they intended to plant more cotton, peanuts and soybeans and less corn and tobacco in 2003 than in 2002. The acreage harvested for winter wheat will be the same as last year. Peanut growers expect to plant 140,000 acres, up 15,000 acres from last year. Cotton acreage is expected to total 105,000 acres, up 11,000 acres from the 2003 acreage planted. The acreage planted to wheat is expected to total 20,000 acres, the same as last year. Corn, soybean and tobacco acreage is expected to total 65,000, 15,000 and 4,200 acres, compared with the respective 2003 acreages of 75,000, 13,000 and 4,400 acres. Producers also expect to bale hay from 250,000 acres in 2004, down 2 percent from the previous year.

UNITED STATES

Corn planted area for all purposes is estimated at 79.0 million acres, up fractionally from both 2002 and 2003. Expected acreage is up from last year throughout much of the Corn Belt as growers are hoping to take advantage of higher corn prices. However, most States in the Southeast and southern Great Plains are intending to decrease their corn plantings as producers are switching to soybeans and cotton due to more favorable prices relative to corn.

Soybean growers intend to plant an estimated 75.4 million acres, up 3 percent from last year. If realized, this will be the largest planted area on record and a rebound from the three year decline in acreage. Growers in all States, except South Dakota and Wisconsin, intend to plant more than or at least as many acres of soybeans as last year. Current high prices are encouraging many producers to plant more soybeans, with the largest acreage increases expected in North Dakota, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Minnesota.

All wheat planted area for the 2004 crop is 43.4 million acres, down 3 percent from 2003. Of the total, about 30.9 million acres are Hard Red Winter, 8.3 million acres are Soft Red Winter, and 4.2 million acres are White Winter. Moisture shortages remain a concern in the Plains States, especially in Kansas and Colorado where winter wheat condition declined during the winter. Acreage declined from last year across most of the country, except in the northern Great Plains, western Corn Belt, and parts of the Delta. The largest acreage declines are in the southern Great Plains, where dry fall conditions persisted during seeding.

Upland cotton acreage is expected to total 14.2 million acres, up 7 percent from last year. Upland growers in the Delta States (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee) intend to plant 3.75 million acres, a 5 percent increase from the previous year. Producers in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and New Mexico intend to plant 6.50 million acres of upland, up 10 percent from 2003. Farmers in the Southeastern States (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia) intend to plant 3.15 million acres of upland cotton, a 4 percent increase from 2003. Upland planted area in California and Arizona is expected to total 780,000 acres, a 2 percent increase from last year.

Peanut producers intend to plant 1.37 million acres of peanuts in 2004, up 2 percent from last year. Of the nine producing States, six intend to plant more acres than in 2003. Southeast growers (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina) intend to plant 933,000 acres, up 6 percent from last year. In the Virginia-North Carolina region, producers intend to plant 137,000 acres, up 1 percent from 2003. Growers in the Southwest (New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas) intend to plant 296,000 acres, 10 percent below 2003.

Flue-cured tobacco, at 231,200 acres, is 1 percent below a year ago. Flue-cured acreage accounts for 56 percent of this year's expected total tobacco acreage. Acreage in North Carolina, the leading flue-cured State, is down 1 percent from last year. Harvested acreage is also expected to decline in South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida by 10 percent, 11 percent, and 5 percent, respectively. In Virginia, harvested acreage is expected to increase by 21 percent over last season. Tobacco producers in Virginia are expected to increase acreage to compensate for the lack of carryover into the 2004 season because of last year's low production.

All hay producers expect to harvest 63.7 million acres of all hay in 2004, up 1 percent from last year. Adequate soil moisture in most of Texas, lower Mississippi Delta, and Great Lakes States enhanced producers expectations to harvest more hay. Extreme dry conditions have left soil moisture very short and water supplies are expected to be inadequate in the central Great Plains and central Rocky Mountains, which decreased harvest intentions. In California, reduced water availability has lowered expected hay acreage in 2004.

Prospective plantings for 2004 with comparisons

Crops	Florida				United States			
	2002	2003	Indicated 2004 ^{1/}	2004 as % of 2003	2002	2003	Indicated 2004 ^{1/}	2004 as % of 2003
	<i>1,000 acres</i>		<i>Percent</i>		<i>1,000 acres</i>		<i>Percent</i>	
CORN:								
Planted for all purposes	75	75	65	87	78,894	78,736	79,004	100
Cotton, Upland planted	120	94	105	112	13,714	13,304	14,175	107
All Hay, harvested	280	255	250	98	63,942	63,342	63,731	101
PEANUTS:								
Planted for all purposes	96	125	140	112	1,353	1,344	1,366	102
SOYBEANS:								
Planted for all purposes	10	13	15	115	73,963	73,404	75,411	103
TOBACCO, HARVESTED								
All types	--	--	--	--	428.3	416.2	414.6	100
Type 11-14	4.6	4.4	4.2	95	245.6	234.4	231.2	99
Winter wheat	19	20	20	100	41,766	44,945	43,372	97

^{1/} Intended plantings in 2004 as indicated by reports from farmers.